

## **BULLYING POLICY**

### **Definition:**

Bullying is defined as deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions that is intended to cause fear, humiliation, intimidation, social exclusion or harm. Bullying often involves repeated behavior and involves people of unequal power. Bullying may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic such as, but not limited to age, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression/nonconformity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, and social, economic, or family status.

Bullying can also be carried out by someone engaging in bullying behavior on behalf of another.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading rumors, social exclusion and isolation, intimidation through gestures); this also includes Cyberbullying:
  - Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, instant messaging, use of email, text messages, cell phones, social media postings to bully others, or digital pictures or images.
4. Bullying by proxy (e.g. someone engaging in bullying through another or on behalf of another)

### **Prohibition:**

Bullying behavior by an individual student, a group of students or an adult is prohibited at all school related functions and events and in all educational environments including, but not limited to, on or off school district property or in a vehicle owned, leased, or used by the school district. A student may be disciplined if the out of school bullying speech or behavior results in a substantial disruption of the learning environment.

### **Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation:**

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to the appropriate building principal. Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct to the appropriate building principal.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the appropriate building principal who will also be designated as the investigator. There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Procedure for investigating reports of bullying:**

The principal, or designee, shall interview the person(s) who are the victim(s) of the bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report in a timely manner.

**Sanctions and supports:**

If it is determined that students participate in bullying behavior or retaliate against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the school district administration and school board may take disciplinary action, including: suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Pupil services staff will provide support for the identified victim(s).

**Disclosure and Public Reporting:**

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy.

Revised: March 25, 2019